



Disability Resource Center **Self-Advocacy Student Survey** Assessment Report

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Choose One: Learning Outcome Assessment

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Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of the Self-Advocacy Student Survey is to measure DRC students' ability to self-advocate through knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as students with disabilities.

Targeted Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of: (1) the function of the Disability Resource Center to verify disability status and identify appropriate academic accommodations; (2) their responsibility to self-disclose and initiate requests for classroom accommodations from course instructors; (3) the rights and responsibilities with regards to obtaining testing accommodations; and (4) the importance of assuming control of their educational goals based on a knowledge of their learning strengths and limitations.

Assessment Methodology

Students who arrived for their initial intake were provided a confidential four-item pre-test survey as part of the DRC registration process. Respondents provided basic demographic information (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) as well as information related to their disability (e.g., nature of disability, when they were first diagnosed as having a disability, etc.). Students were asked to provide their Bronco ID for tracking purposes.

The pre-test survey presented four scenarios that highlighted disability-related issues at the university setting and asked respondents to identify the best course of action he or she would take in each situation. Upon completion of the pre-test survey, students participated in a one-hour intake interview. At that time, accommodation and support needs were discussed, and student vs. course instructor rights and responsibilities were clarified.

At the conclusion of the intake, students scheduled to attend a one-hour general services orientation. This one-on-one orientation with a DRC counselor was scheduled according to the student's preferred date and time, and occurred subsequent to completion of their initial intake. During the orientation, a DRC counselor discussed with each student the procedures for utilizing their approved accommodations, including troubleshooting potential problems that are commonly encountered by DRC students. At the conclusion of the orientation, students were provided with a post-test survey, which contained identical items as the pre-test, but with an alternate item order.

Student Voice administered the survey and provided data management and analysis. Survey responses were entered manually by student assistants through a survey link provided by Student Voice.

Results

A total of 75 students participated in the pre-test survey, which represents approximately 15% of the total number of students actively registered with the DRC as of the Summer 2011 Quarter. Of these 75 students who completed the pre-test survey, 33 of these had completed the post-test survey at the time of reporting, yielding a 44% completion rate.

Demographics. Pre-test respondents were males (63%) and females (37%) between the ages of 18 to 40 years old, with the majority identifying as Caucasian (39%) and Hispanic (35%). The majority of students (80%) were in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors; followed by students in the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences (23%) and those majoring in Business (21%).

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS BY COLLEGE

37%	College of Engineering
19%	College of Science
23%	College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
21%	College of Business Administration
3%	College of Education & Integrative Studies
4%	College of Agriculture
2%	Collins School of Hospitality Management
1%	College of Environmental Design
1 %	Undeclared

In addition, the majority of respondents were undergraduate students (96%) in junior (29%) and freshman (28%) class standing. While the majority of respondents (61%) have attended college for 1 to 4 years, a smaller proportion (23%) have attended college a total of 5-9 years.

Types of Disabilities and Accommodations. With regards to the type of disabilities represented, survey participants identified as having one of more of the following impairments: neurocognitive or learning disabilities (52%), psychiatric/psychological disabilities (26%), medical disabilities (9%), sensory impairments (4%), and mobility impairments (4%). A few respondents declined to respond (5%).

A relatively greater proportion of respondents were first identified as having a disability as adults, either during their enrollment at Cal Poly Pomona (41%) or while attending a community college (17%). In contrast, 39% reported they were first identified as having a disability during their K-12 years. In addition, 50% of respondents reported that they had not received any academic accommodations in the past, while the other half reported testing accommodations such as extended time and distraction-reduced environment as the most common services they had used.

Self-Advocacy Skills. At pre-test, only 22% of respondents correctly demonstrated knowledge of the function of the Disability Resource Center to verify disability status and identify appropriate academic accommodations. The greater number of respondents (37%) indicated that they continued to hold onto secondary education definitions of academic accommodations, such as receiving “one-on-one instruction from professors outside of regular class times” or “study guides” that would state “exactly” needed to be studied for exams. A third of respondents (30%) indicated that they felt uncertain about the identifying their disability status in order to receive accommodations.

At post-test, the majority of respondents (66%) correctly demonstrated knowledge of the function of the Disability Resource Center to verify disability status and identify appropriate academic accommodations. Only 2 respondents continued to feel unsure about the role and purpose of the DRC.

Approximately half of respondents at pre-test demonstrated knowledge of their responsibility to self-disclose and initiate requests for classroom accommodations from course instructors (57%); however, 24% responded that they would not know what to do should a disability-related accommodation need arise in the

classroom. No significant changes were measured at post-test, with 58% respondents indicating that they would initiate a conversation with their professor about their needs for accommodations in the classroom. In addition, 9% of post-test respondents reported that they remained unsure about how they would approach such a situation.

With regards to the legal rights of students with disabilities to reasonable and appropriate testing accommodations, 37% of students indicated at pre-test that they understood their rights; however, another 34% of pre-test respondents indicated that they would comply with professors even if it meant waiving their right to utilize testing accommodations. Thirty percent of students indicated that they were unsure about their rights. In sharp contrast, the overwhelming majority of respondents at post-test (86%) indicated that they would know how to advocate for their legal rights to testing accommodations. One student indicated that he or she would comply with course instructors and waive legal access to testing accommodations. A small percentage of students (9%) continued to remain uncertain.

Finally, while a good percentage of students demonstrated knowledge of the importance of self-determination skills at pre-test (40%), post-test results showed an increase in respondents (73%) who indicated that they would go against their academic department's advice to take on an increased course load if the advice was inconsistent with their understanding of their learning strengths and limitations. Twenty-four percent of post-test respondents indicated that they would heed the advice of others over exercising their own self-determination. Finally, 9% of students remained unsure about how they would advocate for themselves in such a situation.

Conclusion

The results from pre- and post-test data suggest that the majority of students who complete the DRC intake and general services orientation do demonstrate increased awareness of the function and role of the DRC, their legal rights to testing accommodations, the importance of self-determination, and even the need to initiate conversation with professors about their classroom accommodation needs. However, the intake and orientation process appear to be limited in its impact on still a significant percentage of students with disabilities at Cal Poly Pomona in terms of developing their understanding of self-advocacy, particularly when interacting with course instructors.

Implications for Practice

The results of this assessment seem to suggest that the intake and orientation processes currently utilized by the DRC to disseminate information essential for developing student's self-advocacy skills are ineffective in achieving its desired learning outcomes. In the 2011 – 2012 year, DRC will re-evaluate the current structure and format of its intake and orientation procedures, including the consistency of counselors' approaches and the information provided to students.